

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS MINIARD CULPEPPER AND BRIAN WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a time to honor the history, culture, and lasting contributions of African Americans to the United States and to the City of Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, African Americans have played a central role in shaping Boston's identity, from its earliest days to the present, strengthening the city through leadership, creativity, civic engagement, and resilience; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's Black community is richly diverse, including Haitians, Afro-Latinos, United States Freedmen, Nigerians, Caribbean Islanders, and many others, reflecting the global roots and cultural depth of Black Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston has been home to historic trailblazers such as Rebecca Lee Crumpler, the first Black woman physician in the United States; Macon Bolling Allen, the nation's first Black lawyer; William Wells Brown, a leading abolitionist and author; Robert Morris, a civil rights attorney; and Thomas Irving Atkins, the first Black at-large City Councilor on the modern Boston City Council, who helped advance civil rights and fair housing for future generations; *and*

WHEREAS, The founding of Boston's African Lodge Number 459 by Prince Hall and the long tradition of Black institutions, schools, churches, and mutual-aid societies reflect the strength, self-determination, and community leadership that continue to shape Black life in Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's history includes powerful figures such as Phillis Wheatley, the first published African American woman poet; the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, one of the first Black regiments in the Civil War; Melnea Cass, a tireless community organizer; Sarah-Ann Shaw, a civil rights and media pioneer; Reverend Michael E. Haynes, a leader in faith and justice; William H. Lewis, a lawyer and athlete; Dr. Ruth Batson, an education and civil rights advocate; and Crispus Attucks, the first person killed in the American Revolution; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's Black leaders have also shaped sports and public life, including Willie O'Ree, who broke the NHL color barrier; Chuck Cooper, the first Black player

drafted into the NBA; and Bill Russell, whose excellence, leadership, and activism redefined both basketball and social justice in Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Black leaders in Boston have long led the fight for justice and opportunity, from Crispus Attucks to Prince Hall; from the builders of the Abiel Smith School to political leaders such as Mel King and Bill Owens; from Malcolm X, who found his voice in Roxbury, to Ted Landsmark, whose courage in the face of racist violence helped force a reckoning with school desegregation and systemic racism; *and*

WHEREAS, The Museum of African American History, founded in 1963, preserves and interprets African American history and culture in Boston and has continued its public education work amid recent federal funding challenges; *and*

WHEREAS, Black History Month provides an important opportunity to reflect on both the struggles and achievements of African Americans, while recommitting to the work of building a more just, inclusive, and equitable Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston remains committed to honoring Black history, uplifting Black voices, and ensuring that future generations learn from the past while shaping a stronger future; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council hereby proclaims the month of February as Black History Month in the City of Boston and calls upon all residents to celebrate the enduring contributions of African Americans to our city's past, present, and future.

Filed on: February 4, 2026